

From: Ray at MBS
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Microsoft Settlement

I am a software developer, a Microsoft customer and a Microsoft investor. I am pretty certain that Bill Gates wakes up every morning wondering what he can put in his products that will cause me to upgrade to a new version. He also hopes that I will develop software and sell some that needs his new operating system and office products. A few years ago we had a product that sold lots of NT and Office. Someone from Microsoft called to thank us. But if Microsoft comes up with nothing over a long enough period of time the sales will drop to selling software to only new computers that are not replacements for old computers. That would hurt the bottom line. His competitors would like to fix it so only they can come up with new features that they can sell me. That does nothing for me. All I need is 5 different standards to support.

Microsoft reminds me of Ford and the auto industry in 1915. Ford at that time had 90 percent of the auto market. Ford had to compete with GM who put out a car that was just like the Model T only better. By 1928 Ford had less than 50 percent of the market. Microsoft competitors insist on building an operating system and applications that Microsoft users can't run. If GM had built a car that Ford owners could not drive, they would never have sold Chevies. GM was smart enough to build cars that any Ford driver could operate with out lessons. Microsoft should not be held accountable for his would be competitors stupidity. It costs a 100 bucks to buy windows. But it costs 500 to a 1,000 bucks to train someone to run free Linux. There is a clue there if you can see it.

When someone is bright enough to do that....to make a system just like windows only cheaper or better, Microsoft will no longer have 90 percent of the Intel market. Microsoft is fully aware of the danger that poses. Microsoft just filed a suit trying to stop little Lindows from using that name. This tiny start up is planning to make a system that is just like windows only it is supposed to cost less an be a tiny bit better. Microsoft did not sue to stop Netscape, Sun or Linux. They are suing to stop Lindows. There is a second clue there. If you want to take Microsoft down a notch or to make them get off Lindows back.

I own Microsoft stock and still have a loss on it, but I would also like to develop for Microsoft competitors. The Suns, Netscapes, UNIX, and LINUX people don't compete with Windows. To put it in transportation terms they want to stop Ford from selling improved cars. They hope that will help their train, plane, truck, bus and taxi businesses. None of them has a product that competes with Windows. When no one has a competitive product, it is not surprising that the only product on the market has a monopoly.

Microsoft keeps redesigning its Model T. It now is a 55 ford Fairlane with a heater. air conditioning, and cruise control. What needs to happen is for some one to build a 55 Chevie that sells for less than a 55 Ford.

For Microsoft the big problem is not this settlement. The problem is they have run out of new ideas to put in the operating system to get clients to upgrade. That is why XP now comes in a beautiful shade of blue. There chief designers solution is to try to just lease you an operating system and office software instead of selling it to you. That is right up there with Fords "You can have any color you want as long as it is black."

Microsoft has done nothing that Ford did not do. And Microsoft is no more secure in its dominance than Ford was. All government can accomplish is to turn the software industry in to the aircraft industry where all consumers can afford is a ticket to ride. We can transform the software industry from being a parallel of the auto industry to being a parallel of the aircraft industry. Is that what government wants? Perhaps you would prefer a United Airlines type software industry. But it would never create the jobs Ford and GM have created.

I do not know if the Lindows people are a GM or not, but I am certain there is a GM out there if only you will let them have at Microsoft. The problem is any restrictions you put on Microsoft will also apply to his potential competitors.

The problem is the people who think they are Microsofts competitors are not. They are not in the same game... That is why they can't defeat Microsoft. When some one does systems that any windows user can run with out training, they will have Gates in their cross hairs. As long as so called competitors fail to do that you will not stop Microsoft's dominance no matter what the penalty. In fact if you broke Microsoft up one branch would dominate Pc's again, and the others would destroy Oracle and Sun,and Netscape.

The problem is not with Microsoft. Microsoft is just blessed with stupid would be challengers and cursed with government lawyers that think business principles have changed because this time they are dealing with bytes rather than iron and rubber.

Sincerely

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